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# THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL JOURNAL

CONTINUING "THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER"

MAY 1917

## EDUCATIONAL NEWS AND EDITORIAL COMMENT

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An article published in the *Chicago Herald* on April 24 states the dangers of the war situation as it affects schools with such clearness and force that we quote the major part of the article:

**Dangers in  
the War  
Situation**

England is now soberly considering her lack of foresight in failing to guard the children of the nation at the outbreak of the war. Under the pressure of strong emotion school buildings were turned into military camps and hospitals and the teaching force was crippled by the loss of large numbers drawn into other forms of public service.

Various kinds of school extension, like evening schools, medical inspection, dentistry, and free lunches, were either seriously curtailed or given up. The compulsory-education laws were relaxed. Over 150,000 children between the ages of eleven and thirteen were lawfully excused from school to go to work.

Nearly 300,000 little children of kindergarten or primary age were turned out of school as an immediate wartime economy. Then followed the partial or complete breakdown of settlements and other agencies for child-welfare work.

It will be a difficult task to gauge the results of this policy, but England is facing a few facts that point a warning. Juvenile delinquency in England has increased at least 34 per cent since the war began.

The committee appointed to investigate the health of munition workers reports that working children are overtaxed and should be protected, "not only against immediate breakdown, but also against the imposition of strains that may stunt future growth and development." Regardless of any other peril to the national life the committee recommends that children should not be employed at night or for more than twelve hours a day.

For thirteen years the national child-labor committee of America has been active in practical measures to protect the children of the nation from the

recognized effects of premature labor and to raise the age of compulsory school attendance. Owen R. Lovejoy, as general secretary of the committee, is entitled to a hearing at this time.

At the recent national conference on child labor he said: "Those of us who have dedicated ourselves to the protection of these defenseless ones must keep our heads clear and our motives unmingled, determining that, whatever happens, all other forms of treasure, all other forms of wealth, all other methods of defense, shall be sacrificed before we compel the children of America to pass through the fire."

The committee is sending forth an appeal and a warning to the citizens of the United States to take under serious consideration the following points:

"1. Oppose all attempts to break down the school system in your vicinity either by relaxing enforcement of compulsory-education laws or by cutting down school funds. Arnold Bennett said in England under like circumstances, 'Education is the very last thing we ought to economize in.'

"2. Oppose all attempts to break down the labor laws of your state either by giving young children special permits to work or by exempting certain establishments from the law limiting hours of labor. In England where they relaxed the enforcement of the laws they have found 'too big a price is being paid for the output.'

"3. Support as usual local and national social agencies. Do not allow settlements, recreation centers, health boards, juvenile protective associations, child-welfare and child-labor committees, and other organizations that it has taken years to build up to be destroyed."

Is this warning premature? The fact that the appropriation for the enforcement of the federal child-labor law was not passed by the last Congress is practically unknown because thought is daily forced out of the normal and habitual course and focused on a single tremendous issue. In the legislatures of almost every state there are pending school and child-labor laws that are being pushed aside in the stress of the immediate need of war legislation.

Legislators are objecting to any reminder of these facts. "This is no time," they say, "to consider school and child-labor legislation." Yet England is at this moment frankly and publicly repudiating this policy as a menace to the national life.

This article is a warning against the adoption of negative measures. Whoever closes schools or curtails their activities looks upon education as something that can be foregone. **Positive Measures Necessary** There is another wholly different attitude which ought to be assumed. It is the attitude which we assume toward the food supply. We must speed up the machinery of good production so as to produce food in greater abundance because it is an absolute necessity and because other countries less well condi-

tioned than we are depending on us for the reconstruction which is to follow the war. So also with education. It is an absolute necessity. We must increase rather than decrease our efforts to produce effective results.

For example, the suggestion has been made in several quarters that schools close so that pupils—even pupils in the elementary schools—may work on farms. It is perfectly clear on a moment's reflection that if children are to be productive they will need supervision; and if farms are to yield as much as possible, there must be an application of the highest available intelligence in their cultivation. If farming is to be properly carried on, it must be organized as an extension of the educational system, not as a rival to it. Boys and girls under proper supervision can be guided in ways of industry and economy, but these highest virtues of training can be secured only by educational methods; they will not come by chance and they will not come by throwing off all the public provision for child supervision. In England and Germany alike the disturbed conditions have gone to the very roots of family life and personal conduct.

In a special bulletin on this matter the United States Department of Labor makes the following statement:

**Statements of  
the Depart-  
ment of Labor**      Thousands of children besides war orphans and refugees have been directly affected by the war, according to reports from belligerent countries which have come to the Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor. Juvenile delinquency has increased, more children have been employed under adverse conditions, special measures have been necessary to protect the health of mothers and babies, and home life has been broken up by the increased employment of mothers.

A preliminary survey of the foreign material emphasizes the importance of a strict enforcement of all child-labor and school-attendance laws and a generous development of infant-welfare work by public and private agencies. The Children's Bureau of the Department suggests that a well-planned Baby Week will be more valuable this year than ever before and will gladly send its bulletin of directions for Baby-Week Campaigns to any address.

To those who are especially interested in working children, the Bureau's new report on the Employment-Certificate System in New York State will show certain points which are essential if an age limit for children's work is to be effective.

The best course to follow is that adopted by Indianapolis, Atlanta, Louisville, and a number of other cities, which have appointed teachers for the summer to extend the educational opportunities offered children rather than curtail these opportunities. It is to be hoped that other cities will see the importance of doing more than ever before. Let the children prepare for later life in a systematic, intelligent way. They must not be made to carry the nation's burden until they are prepared. The real problem of the moment is to give them their preparation as soon as possible, conducting, if need be, all-year schools.

Some departments are fortunate because they can contribute directly to material preparedness. The home-economics departments in schools can do invaluable service by teaching how to preserve food. Every board of education ought to organize night classes in various forms of preserving, and the girls ought to be instructed in these lines. Especially will it be necessary for preserving without sugar or tin or glass to become a common art. This requires skill above the ordinary kind of canning, but it is entirely possible.

The commercial departments in schools can help in response to such demands as those stated in the announcement from the Civil Service Commission published on another page of this issue.

The manual-training departments and the nature-study departments should do much in teaching use and economy of material.

Other departments, especially those dealing with literary sides of the course of study, may seem for the moment to be less immediately useful, but the teachers in charge of these departments should devote themselves no less vigorously than do the teachers in the technical departments to the business of promoting national efficiency by carrying on the work of the schools at a higher level and with more than the usual energy. Reading may not always stand out as the most important of human activities, but the democracy for which our nation has taken its stand depends today and tomorrow on the ability of our people to think independently and to get their ideas each for himself.

Finally, it is one of the clearest lessons of the war that when it is all over there will be everywhere more free education, more of an opportunity for every class, more demand for training and for intelligent skill and wisdom to guide in the ways of peaceful reconstruction. If the United States is to play a worthy part in that later, more hopeful task, every school officer must be prepared to contribute to a school organization that is purged of waste and error and is at its maximum of effectiveness in method and achievement.

The Bureau of Education issues the following bulletin, which the *Journal* is glad to reproduce, especially because of the wholesome attitude which is exhibited toward broader school interests. The recognition of industrial education as a part of general education is encouraging and we believe the most promising advance which has been made as a result of the recent years of discussion:

A review of vocational education for the year is afforded by the following condensed summary of the most significant features which have been noted as indicating the directions in which progress is taking place. (See 1916 *Report of the Commissioner of Education*, Vol. I, chap. viii.)

1. In place of the conception of vocational education as a comparatively simple matter which prevailed a few years ago, there is an evident tendency to see in it a very complex problem, for the solution of which there must be much patient investigation and the cordial co-operation of all possible educational and social agencies.
2. There appears to be a growing recognition of the fact that vocational education will not of itself solve all the problems of life or of vocation, but that it must take its part as an essential part of a complete plan of education that provides for all legitimate interests and activities of the individual.
3. There has been almost unprecedented interest in the proposed federal aid for vocational education; it is doubtful if any other educational bill before Congress ever attracted an equal amount of popular attention.
4. The serious objections urged against vocational education have been stated in somewhat more definite and tangible form, and the answers to these objections suggested.
5. There has been noticeably less interest in the unit-versus-dual-control controversy, the preponderance of opinion appearing to be against the organization of special independent boards for the control of vocational education.
6. In the states which have organized departments for the promotion of vocational education on a state-wide basis, the greatest progress noted during

the year appears to have been in the development of the day continuation school for young employed workers.

7. Recognition of the importance of proper machinery for insuring a supply of adequately trained teachers, including an effective plan of certification, is gradually making itself felt, though there still remains much ground to be traversed.

8. The emphasis on language work in vocational schools and the high grade of results of such work as exhibited in numerous school papers and magazines, written, edited, and printed by students, afford ample evidence that the cultural possibilities of vocational education are not being neglected, and that the necessity of a thorough grounding in the fundamentals of education is clearly recognized.

9. In the vocational-guidance field the important progress of the year has been a further development of interest on the part of the public school and the resulting beginnings of modification of school methods and courses of study.

10. In convention deliberations and in magazine articles there has been increasing emphasis on the significance of art in industry and on the great importance of more adequate attention to this matter in all plans for education.

11. Within the past year or two there have been several notable instances of the employment of a trained director, with instructions to make a careful study of conditions before buildings or courses of study are planned—in contrast with what has been a rather common practice in other types of school in the past, namely, to erect and equip the building and then seek a principal.

12. The extension of the survey idea to the field of state-wide investigations, in which the Bureau of Education has done pioneer work, has for the first time been applied to a state-wide vocational-education survey in Indiana, where a study has been inaugurated by a group of agencies working in co-operation.

13. There has been much discussion, as well as actual development, in the field of so-called prevocational education.

14. There has been a notable development of new types of work in the manual-training shops, in the effort to meet the demand for courses that shall be more practical and that shall have more real value in preparing the way for specific industrial education.

15. There has been a noticeable tendency in the direction of a more sympathetic and sane appraisal of the values of the manual arts in the public school on the part of the partisans of so-called real vocational education.

Greatly increased demands for stenographers and typists in the United States Government service at Washington, D.C., owing to the present emergency, require frequent examinations. Appointments in large numbers are to be made as soon as eligibles are available. It is the manifest duty of citizens with this special knowledge to use it at this time where it will be of most value to the government.

**Announcement  
of the Federal  
Civil Service  
Commission**

For the present, examinations for the Departmental Service, for both men and women, will be held every Tuesday in four hundred of the principal cities of the United States, and applications may be filed with the Commission at Washington, D.C., at any time.

The entrance salary ranges from \$900 to \$1,200 a year. Advancement of capable employees is reasonably rapid.

Applicants must have reached their eighteenth birthday on the date of the examination.

The government service offers a desirable field to bright and ambitious persons.

For full information in regard to the scope and character of the examination and for application forms address the U.S. Civil Service Commission, Washington, D.C., or the Secretary of the U.S. Civil Service Board of Examiners at any of the following-named cities: Boston, Mass.; New York, N.Y.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Atlanta, Ga.; Cincinnati, Ohio; Chicago, Ill.; St. Paul, Minn.; St. Louis, Mo.; New Orleans, La.; Seattle, Wash.; San Francisco, Cal.; Honolulu, Hawaii; and San Juan, Porto Rico.

The great cost of our public educational system is continually borne in on the careful observer. The following announcement presents at the same time clear evidence that the burden of taxation for education and also evidence that economies can be intelligently sought rather than demanded in a wholly arbitrary fashion:

**State Survey  
to Promote  
Efficiency and  
Economy**

Declaring that better educational results can be secured in California for the money now expended in that department of government, and that an attempt will be made to demonstrate the fact, the Taxpayers' Association of California has announced the creation by the Association of a special Bureau of Educational Investigation, which will immediately undertake a thorough analytical survey on a state-wide basis.

Under the general supervision of the director of the Association, the work will be conducted by Wilford E. Talbert, who for the past three years has been director of reference and research of the Oakland public schools. The services of Professor Ellwood P. Cubberley, head of the Department of Education at Leland Stanford Junior University, as consulting expert, also have been secured.

In announcing the creation of the new bureau and the work it is to do, Director Clark gave out the following statement:

"The Taxpayers' Association of California exists for the purpose of eliminating waste and promoting greater efficiency in the administration of public affairs. As a part of its operating program it will attempt to show the business



men and taxpayers of California how they can get better educational results for the money spent. Educational leaders for many years have been demanding changes for the better, but either have achieved no results or else have had to be satisfied with so many compromises that it is generally admitted that the highest efficiency is not being obtained even with the large amount of money now being spent. The direct object of the new bureau will be to show the men who pay the bills that the principles of good school administration are fundamentally related to the cash drawer and the pocketbook.

"The Association has no ax to grind in this or in any other matter and no reason for wanting to show up bad conditions. The men who have caused the California state school system to be ranked as among the best in the country are entitled to profound respect. Even they, however, will not contend that great improvement cannot be made in the business management and conduct of school affairs. If the Bureau of Educational Investigation selects any city or county as a base of operations, it will be because a beginning must be made somewhere. It is hoped that the Association and its Bureau will have the hearty co-operation of public officials throughout the state."

The Illinois legislature passed the new school law for Chicago and the governor signed it immediately. It was passed as an emergency measure and at once became the law governing the schools.

**Chicago's  
School Law**

It is difficult to predict just what course events will take. The disadvantage of going to press two weeks before the *Journal* is issued is keenly felt by one who has to write about a situation which is moving as fast as this.

Up to date the mayor, acting under the new law, has nominated Mr. Jacob Loeb, the president of the present Board, for membership in the new Board. The nomination was put over. This action on the part of the mayor is significant, because the Supreme Court of the state has just rendered a decision which holds the so-called first Loeb rule, aimed at the Teachers Federation, to be valid. This rule was passed by the Board during the first term of Mr. Loeb.

The decision recognizes the powers of the Board in the most unequivocal terms as follows:

The Board has the absolute right to decline to employ or to re-employ any applicant for any reason whatever or for no reason at all. The Board is responsible for its action only to the people of the city from whom, through the mayor, the members have received their appointments.

It is no infringement upon the constitutional rights of anyone for the Board to decline to employ him as a teacher in the schools, and it is

immaterial whether the reason for the refusal to employ him is because the applicant is married or unmarried, is of fair complexion, is dark, is or is not a member of a trade union, or whether no reason is given for such refusal.

The Board is not bound to give any reason for its action. It is free to contract with whomsoever it chooses. Questions of policy are solely for the determination of the Board, and when they have once been determined by it the courts will not inquire into their propriety.

The Teachers Federation sees in this ruling and in the nomination of Mr. Loeb for the new Board indication that there is a determination on the part of the mayor to destroy the Federation. The City Council, which must confirm the mayor's nomination, has accordingly been appealed to and there is promise that before the new Board is actually appointed there will be further controversy. The new Board under the law is a board of eleven. The present membership of the old Board is nineteen and it appears that the old Board holds over until the new Board is appointed.

The teachers have gained permanent tenure "under rules of the Board concerning conduct and efficiency." When the bill was first introduced, the teachers were asked by their friends what the phrase "under the rules of the Board" might mean, but they were at that time optimistic about the outcome.

The new law creates a business manager co-ordinate in power with the superintendent. Indeed, if the new Board so wills, the business manager can in reality supersede the superintendent in a number of important matters. Here again the friends of the bill before it became a law promised that Board rules would put matters to rights even where the law seemed a little weak.

Thus Chicago starts on a series of experiments in school government. On the dark side of the picture are evidences that the bitter controversy is to go on and on. On the bright side is the fact that the superintendent is to have a term of four years. There are other favorable indications. Chicago has become aware of its school system. Several organizations have been brought into being by the discussions of the past eight months which promise to help the new Board find a better way. The Board is smaller than before, which is good. On the

whole, something has probably been gained, and there is a possibility at least of radical changes for the better if the right kind of board is appointed.

The *Republican* of Salt Lake City prints two items regarding the junior high school in and near Salt Lake City.

**A Successful Junior High School** That the junior-high-school system has proven a success is the report of a special committee submitted to the board of education of the Granite School District.

The movement for a junior high school was begun over a year ago by the superintendent, who perfected the plans for the reorganization of the district, which includes Garfield, Magna, Holliday, Granger, and the Granite high school.

"We believe the break from the traditional form of elementary-school organization," says the report, "to be a consistent step in educational progress; that it is fundamentally correct. It is a factor in the unification of the educational system. It gives pupils of the junior high school opportunity for a closer relation with existing social life. It creates new ideals and affords a greater variety of stimuli, increasing the potential of a more varied product by giving consideration to the individual differences of its charges.

"We have found the plan of organization practical. Departmental work has increased the efficiency of the teachers' efforts, with a corresponding reaction from the pupils.

"The attitude of the physical 'misfit' is different in junior high school. He has increased opportunities to find himself. Students as a whole look further forward than to the end of the former eighth-grade milestone, and, becoming familiar with secondary-school organization, customs and manners, are stimulated to go farther in school life.

"We appreciate the support given the junior-high-school movement by its patrons, deeming that a factor of its approval by the pupils.

"We believe the junior high school has won recognition on its merit, and we are in full accord with the approval given by the leading educators of America of this movement. We therefore commend the step taken in our school reorganization and give it our hearty indorsement."

Recognition of the practical utility of junior high schools in the system of public education grows with the extension of what was vigorously opposed in the beginning as a useless departure.

Two such intermediate schools are in operation in this city, and none had thought to question seriously their effectiveness as part of the city's educational work.

But a point is brought out in a report just submitted by a special committee after a survey of the Granite district that deserves a word of emphasis because of its thorough practicability. It is that observation that it leads pupils to "look further forward than to the end of the former eighth-grade milestone, and, becoming familiar with secondary-school organization, customs, and manners, [they] are stimulated to go farther in school life."

An indorsement like that cannot fail to impress the board of the Granite School District favorably.